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ABSTRACT

These interviews, conducted during the 1976-77 and 1977-78 school years by a group of students from the Rochester City School District, present 5 men and 24 women in a variety of career roles that are neither traditional nor stereotypical. The people interviewed speak of the reasons for their choices and of their background of family support. Many of them provide a look at the family life-styles they have designed to support their career roles. (JH)

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CHOICES/ CHANGES

An Investigation of Alternative Occupational Role Models

Authors: A group of youths supervised by Barbara Rosenfeld

Photographs by Pam Benham and Leslie Locketz

Directed by Mary Gilbert
Community Education Center
Rochester City School District

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Introduction

The interviews that follow are an attempt to present women and men--all from the Rochester, New York, area--who represent a variety of career roles that are neither traditional nor stereotyped. The people interviewed speak here of the reasons for their choices and of their background of family support. Many of these individuals give us a look at the family life-styles they have designed that support their roles. One of the marks of our changing society can be seen in the fact that none of these people view themselves in their vocations as very exceptional or unusual.

These interviews were given during the 1976-77 and 1977-78 school years. Since that time, a few of these individuals have advanced in their careers or moved on to other areas of interest.

Students' Introduction

Traditionally, people have often followed what appeals to or is acceptable to the majority of the members of the society in which they live. Certain thought patterns have been passed from one generation to the next. But there are new and advanced changes coming about. This book of role models is a small effort toward recognizing these changes. Here we show people who pay no attention to the words "sexism" or "racism," men and women who work at what they want, not at what society wants.

Being part of the production of this book has in itself been an experience. As we interviewed people, we learned how to communicate as well as how to listen. Enlightening, too, were meeting so many different people in so many different fields and finding out about opportunities we had not known existed. We got to see what a role model really is: how people can serve as positive examples for others to do what was once thought impossible. It is easy to say one is going to do something, but quite another thing to go ahead and accomplish it. We learned to ask the right questions to find out what we wanted to know.

We hope these people will be role models for you, as they have been for us.

Sandra Dunbar

Marilyn Chase
Truck Driver

Marilyn Chase drives a truck. She also mills flour, bags chick-peas, and helps run a business. Marilyn is one of eleven people who work in a collective and run a natural-foods warehouse. She and her co-workers, seven men and three other women, distribute natural foods all over New York State and parts of Pennsylvania.

In the collective, there is no boss; everyone pitches in to get the work done. Since there are many jobs to be done in order to run the business, truck driving is one of Marilyn's activities.

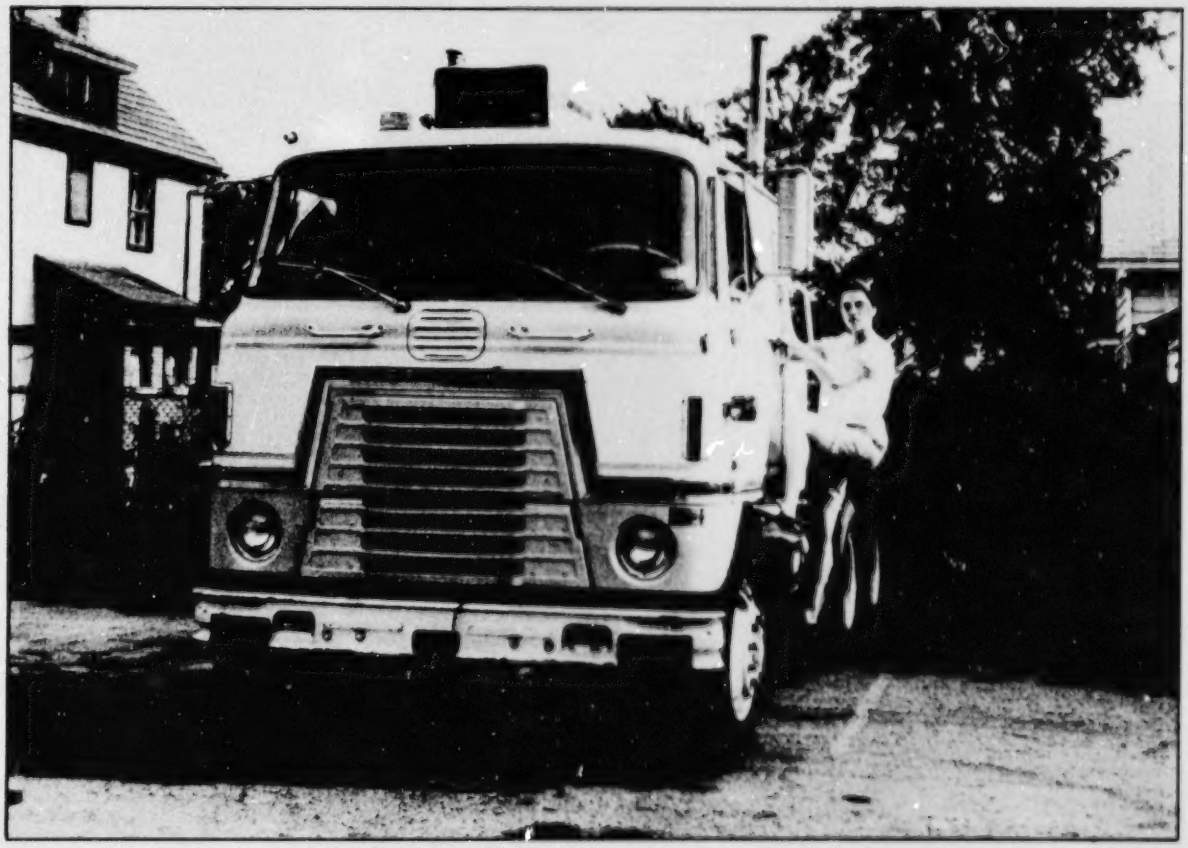
Marilyn never felt good about being a secretary, a job she held before becoming a member of the collective. However, she enjoys working in a collective where everyone gets to use her or his brains. Being able to work where people are free to be who they really are and to develop a

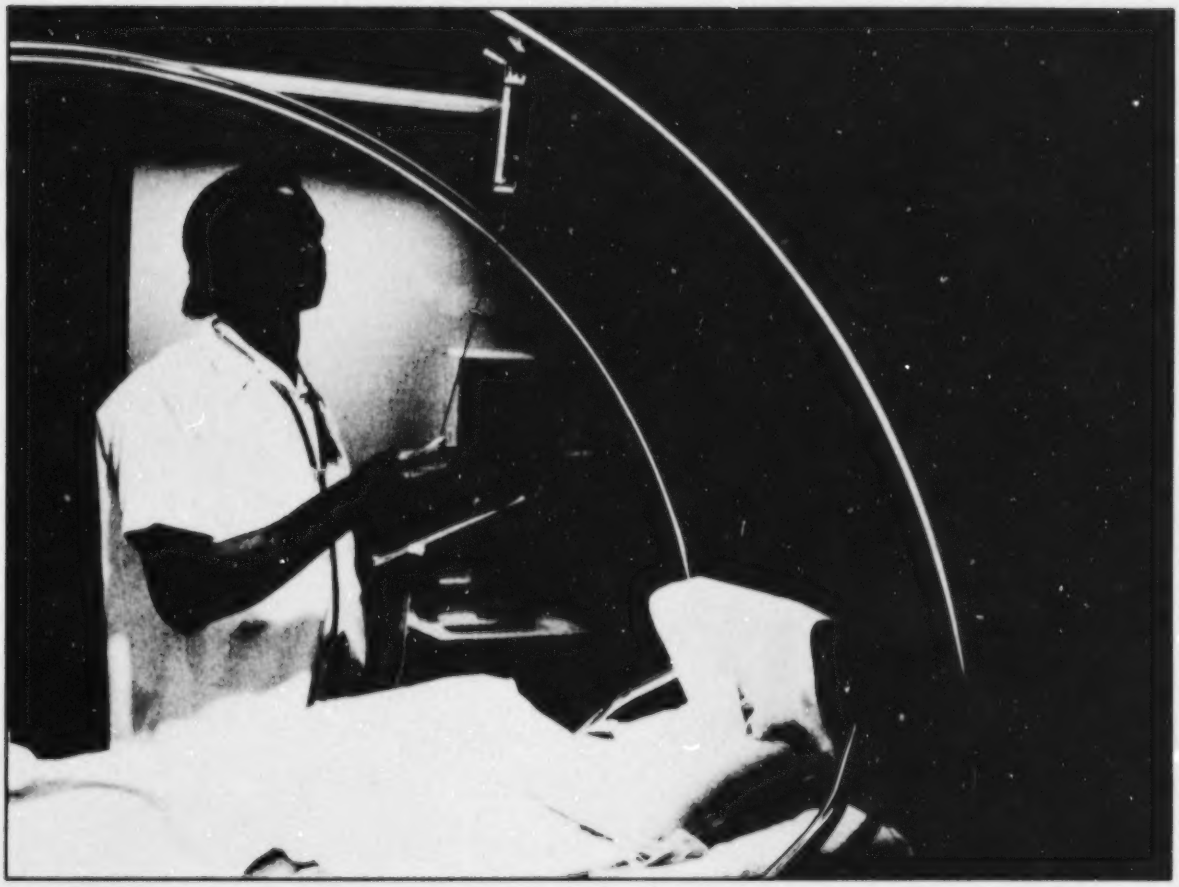
sense of responsibility is very important to Marilyn.

Marilyn feels she has had on-the-job training as a truck driver. Men and women handle the truck runs equally for the collective, as they share other work. Marilyn receives a lot of surprised looks when she is driving and when she pulls into all-male truck stops. She feels really good when younger people see her driving and realize that women, too, can be truck drivers.

The most important thing to Marilyn about her work is human relationships. She has this suggestion for young women and men: "Steer toward people who make you feel comfortable about being who you are and who don't try to give you bad feelings about yourself by pretending you have no intelligence and can't learn."

"It doesn't really matter what kind of job you do," Marilyn says. "Being in a work situation that makes you feel comfortable and healthy is what is most important."





Thomas Davidson

Nurse

Thomas Davidson is a licensed practical nurse who works at Strong Memorial Hospital. He is currently assigned to the Intensive Care Unit. Before he got his nurse's training, he worked as a nursing assistant for twelve years.

Tom enjoys his career. He likes the people, the kind of work he does, and talking with patients and helping to make them well. In Tom's opinion, a person always feels wanted and needed in nursing or health-related fields.

Because he has interests and hobbies apart from his work, Tom feels that it is important for him to have his own time. For this reason, Tom does not want to be a doctor. He feels that being a doctor is a 24-hour-a-day job. Tom knows that as a nurse, when he reports to the hospital, he's on his shift, dedicated and committed, yet when his shift is over, he's his own person and can use his time to do his own thing.

Tom uses a lot of his free time to work on cars. He has always been interested in cars and feels he has a natural ability in that area. However, he doesn't want a full-time job as an auto mechanic. He feels he would not enjoy "playing with cars" if it were an everyday task he had to do professionally. Playing basketball and watching T.V. are other activities Tom enjoys.

Tom is married and has three children. Because he works the night shift at Strong, his days are free to enjoy his hobbies. He generally sees his children only on weekends, and since they are busy teenagers, this usually works out pretty well.

Whether he is working with sick people or "sick" cars, Tom is a person who enjoys helping others and leading an active life at the same time.

Elizabeth Pine

Judge

Elizabeth Pine was a lawyer in private practice for ten years before she was elected Monroe County Family Court Judge. She has since been elected Judge of the New York State Supreme Court.

Elizabeth's decision to go into the field of law came from her early contact with women lawyers as role models. To Elizabeth, those women had interesting lives and did useful things; she wanted to be like them.

As the oldest child in an all-girl family, Elizabeth was encouraged to be successful and pursue a career.

When she was in law school, only 12 of the 600 students were women. She feels it would have been nice to have had more female company during law school.

At present, Elizabeth's goal is to serve her 14-year term in the state Supreme Court, doing the best she can. She is young to be in the state Supreme Court and may want to serve another term. At this point, although there has never been a woman in the Appellate Division of the Court of Appeals, it is likely that women will soon be in those positions, and perhaps Elizabeth will serve on one of those higher courts.

Elizabeth is married and has three children. Her husband is supportive of her in her career and is also very involved in his own business. The fact that both parents work forces the Pines to focus on family priorities. Both Elizabeth and her husband feel it is important to arrange their schedules to meet their children's needs. This is difficult when they are at high points in their respective careers and each under pressure.

Elizabeth is glad that her children are encouraged to be independent. She is pleased that she is living her own life and not living through her children. She enjoys gardening, cooking, swimming, and skiing, and feels that it is important that her interests and hobbies involve her home and her family.

Elizabeth's busy life includes marriage, family, and a career. At home, in court, and in her chambers, she has a lot of energy and concern for the people she is involved with, personally and professionally.

Margaret Ho
Chemist

Margaret Ho is a chemist who does basic research in photographic chemistry for Eastman Kodak in Rochester. She spends much of her time in the laboratory doing research and then studies the results.

It is hard for Margaret to think of her scientific job as untraditional in this decade. Ten or fifteen years ago, there were hardly any women in chemistry. In fact, Margaret can remember when there was no women's rest room in the chemistry building at school. Fortunately, other women broke into the scientific field before her. She feels lucky to have been brought up and educated at a time in history when she can reap the rewards of these pioneers.

Margaret was brought up in an open way. Her parents encouraged her sister and her to pursue the careers they wanted. The parents helped their daughters a great deal by never saying such things as "men are supposed to be doctors and women are supposed to be nurses." In high school, Margaret's abilities were strongest in chemistry, physics, and math, so it seemed natural to pursue a scientific career.

Sometimes Margaret feels resentful when she hears talk about women chemists being hired just because they are women and not because they are qualified scientists. She knows she is a qualified chemist. She received many job offers when she completed her Ph.D. degree in organic chemistry. She is aware that there are other fields and areas in which job discrimination toward women exists, but feels certain that there is room for qualified, educated women scientists.

Margaret finds her career interesting. In her spare time she enjoys skiing, hiking, and reading.

RESEARCH
LABORATORIES

Jane Taylor Gallagher

Car Salesperson

"Every day is unusual. No day is the same." This is one of the reasons Jane Taylor Gallagher loves her work. Jane sells new and used cars and trucks at Taylor Chevrolet.

Jane's interest in the car sales business goes back a long way. Her father owns Taylor Chevrolet, and selling cars has been a family way of life. She remembers being hired at age 6 to clean the candy and soft drink machines at the dealership.

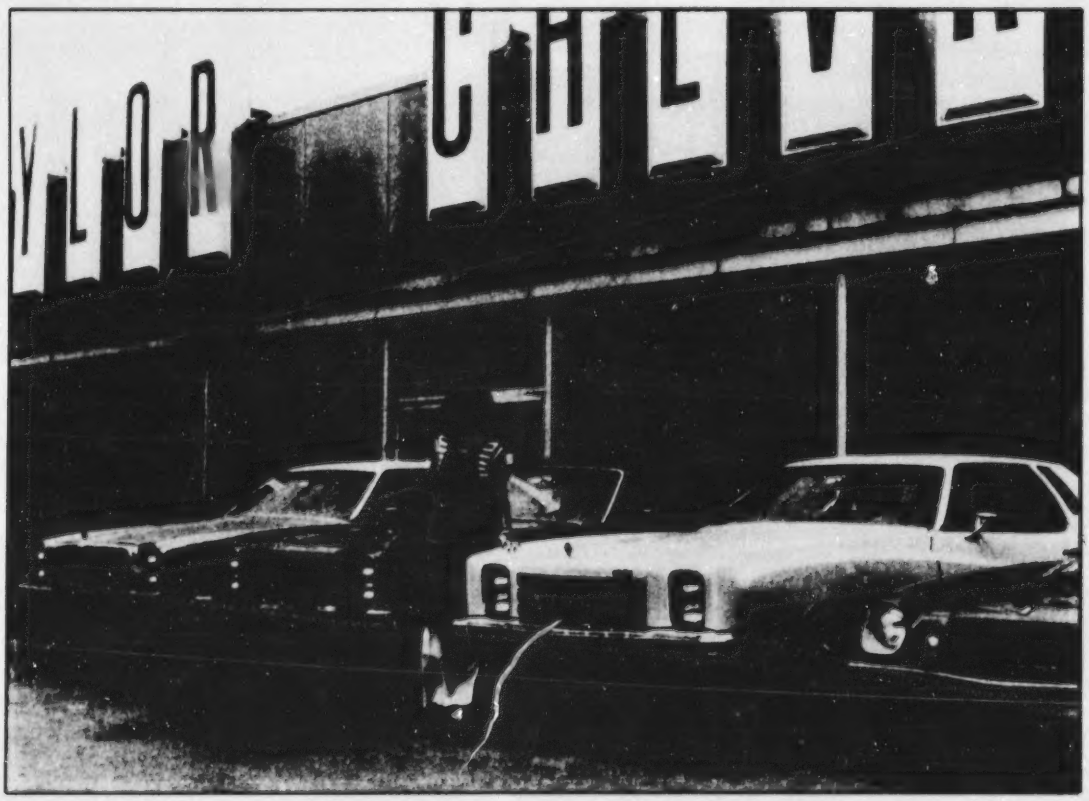
Selling cars is a full-time job. Jane generally works a 60-hour week. She says selling cars is a field full of pressure from other salespeople, man-

agers, and customers. She feels that being a woman gives her an advantage in her job. "People tend to have more faith in you, and trust you more, as a woman," she says. "It is an advantage because it is unique."

According to Jane, car salespersons must be dedicated to the vehicle, the company, and themselves. The most important thing is to know the vehicle, she feels. Any salesperson must be very familiar with the product in order for the customer to develop trust, Jane thinks, and it is also important to treat each customer as an individual.

Jane is married, and her husband is the used-car manager at Taylor Chevrolet. They both work long hours and always "talk cars." Jane enjoys playing tennis and riding horses. She has seven horses and rides and shows them quite often.

"If you work well under pressure, can get along with people, and have self-pride, selling cars may be the field for you, too," says Jane. Jane not only enjoys her work, but is good at it, too. In 1976 she was the top salesperson of the year at Taylor Chevrolet.



Ruth Scott

City Council Member/
Bank Staff Developer

"I always want to be open to whatever opportunities come my way." Ruth Scott, currently Rochester City Council Member and Staff Developer for Community Savings Bank, has had many ideas along the way about what she might do with her life. At 13, she wanted to be a nurse or a missionary. Later, she focused on education and counseling. She has worked as a human relations specialist, and has been deeply involved in community groups and neighborhood organizations.

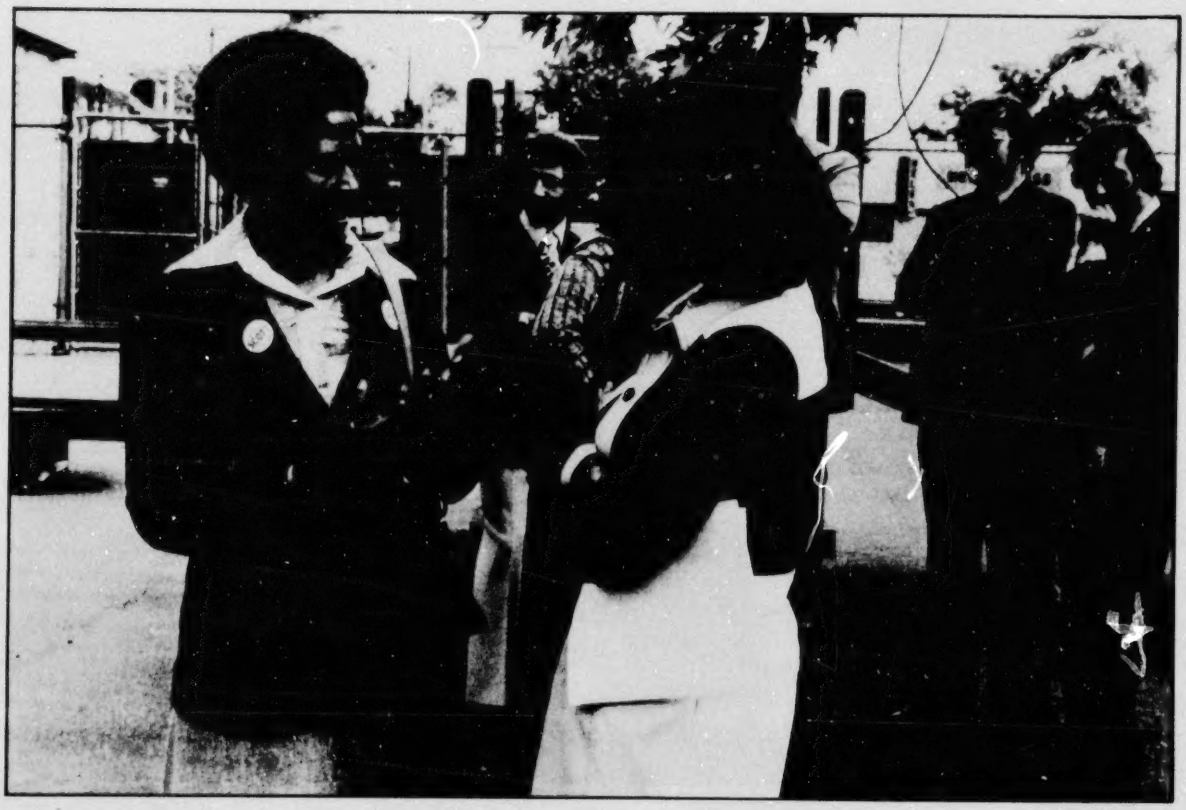
Ruth feels that the field of politics is now more open to women than it once was, although it still has a long way to go. She feels that women have to become more active and get all the experience they can to be considered for political office, and that it is important to be well informed about what is going on in the politi-

cal arena. She says, "Whatever kinds of abilities you have, whether you are a woman or a man, if you don't develop those, then you handicap yourself."

Ruth's job often takes her away from her family. Night meetings are difficult and campaigning means even more time away from her family. The Scotts view their marriage as a partnership, and before Ruth undertook her position as City Council Member, she and her husband discussed the problems involved. Both were committed to the belief that this was an important opportunity to be taken. In addition, the Scotts value having uninterrupted family time. When they are reading stories, saying prayers with the children, or eating supper, the Scotts take only emergency phone calls.

Ruth feels she has had continuing encouragement from her family and teachers. Her parents expected her to go to college and get a broad education. She felt she had the right to choose a professional career. She realizes now that she was steered toward traditionally female professions, like teaching, nursing, or social work; the alternative was a full-time family life. In today's society, Ruth finds she can combine both a professional career and a family life.

This active and concerned individual finds time to enjoy playing the piano, painting portraits, sewing, knitting, cooking, reading, and writing poetry. Ruth credits her Christian religion as being the guiding force in her life.

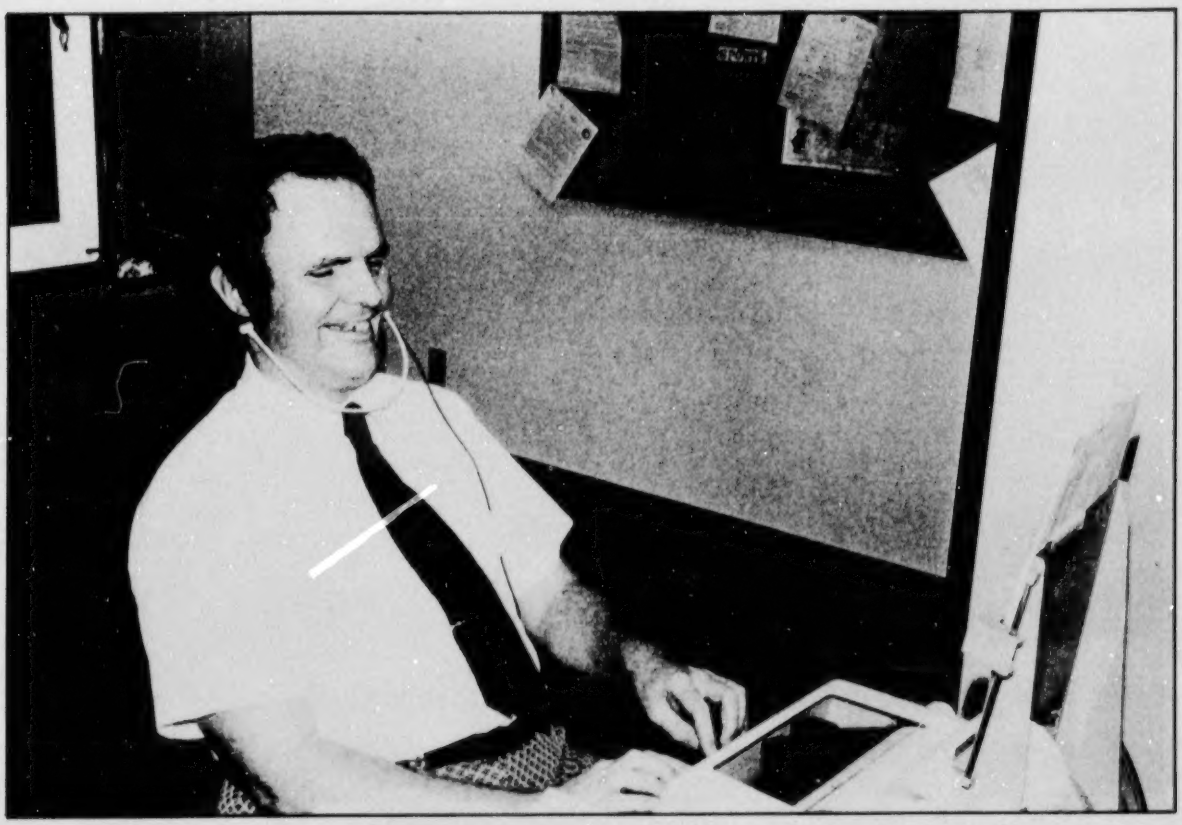


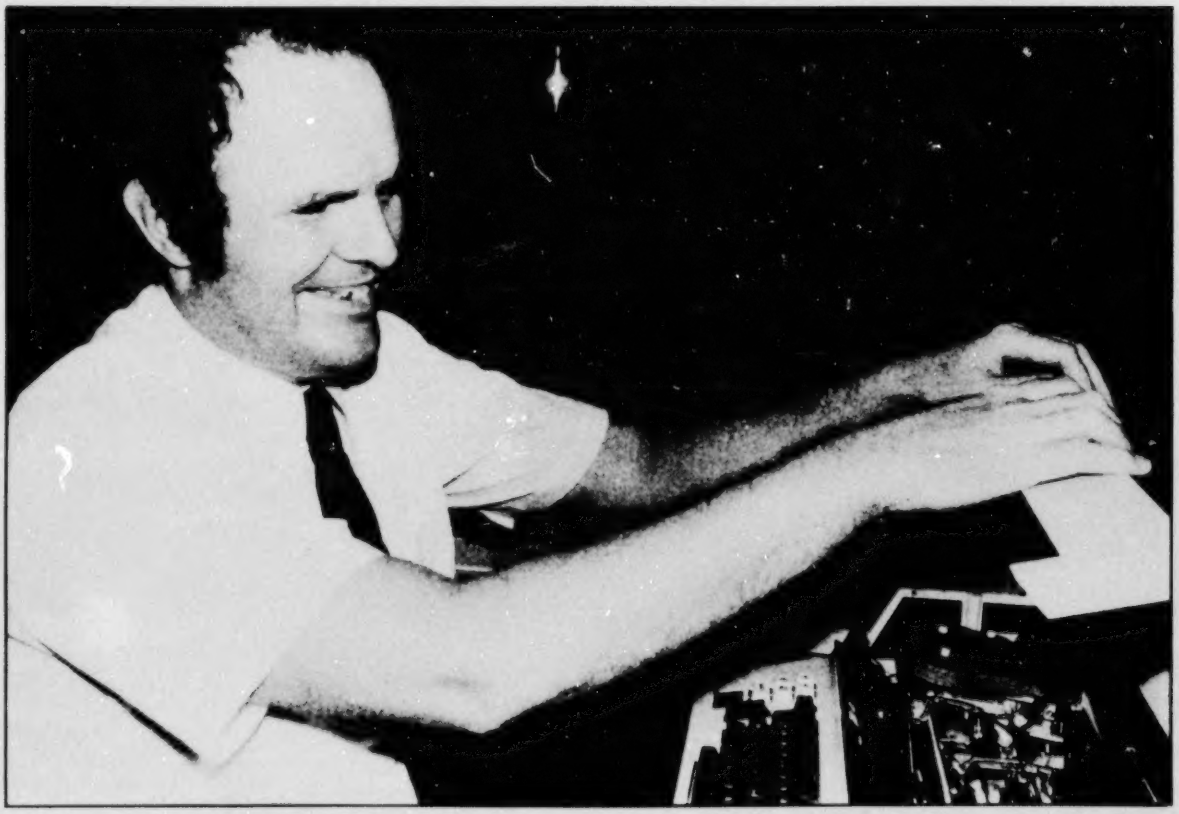
Edward Duffy
Correspondence Technician

Edward Duffy is a correspondence technician for the Xerox Corporation. In other words, Ed could be called a secretary. He works with fairly technical equipment in order to perform his job. He is responsible for message sending and receiving, mail delivery, and dictation work.

Secretarial work was not a career goal for Ed. He actually had very little secretarial training in high school. Ed, who is totally blind, began working for Xerox as a computer programmer in 1968. His visual handicap turned out to be a problem in computer programming, so he was transferred to his present job. He finds his job rewarding, both monetarily and personally.

"Most men to this day don't realize what is involved in secretarial skills," Ed explains. He feels that many people who have secretaries take





them for granted and never realize how many important functions secretaries perform.

Does his work in a traditionally female occupation make him less sexist than other men? Ed feels strongly that women in the working world in general have many justifiable gripes. In many areas, women get less pay and fewer opportunities for advancement, he thinks. He feels that a woman should get the chance to try out for any job available, and that if the woman can't do the job, it means only that this particular woman can't do it.

As a handicapped person, Ed identifies with women in their natural desire to have all opportunities open to them in which to prove themselves.

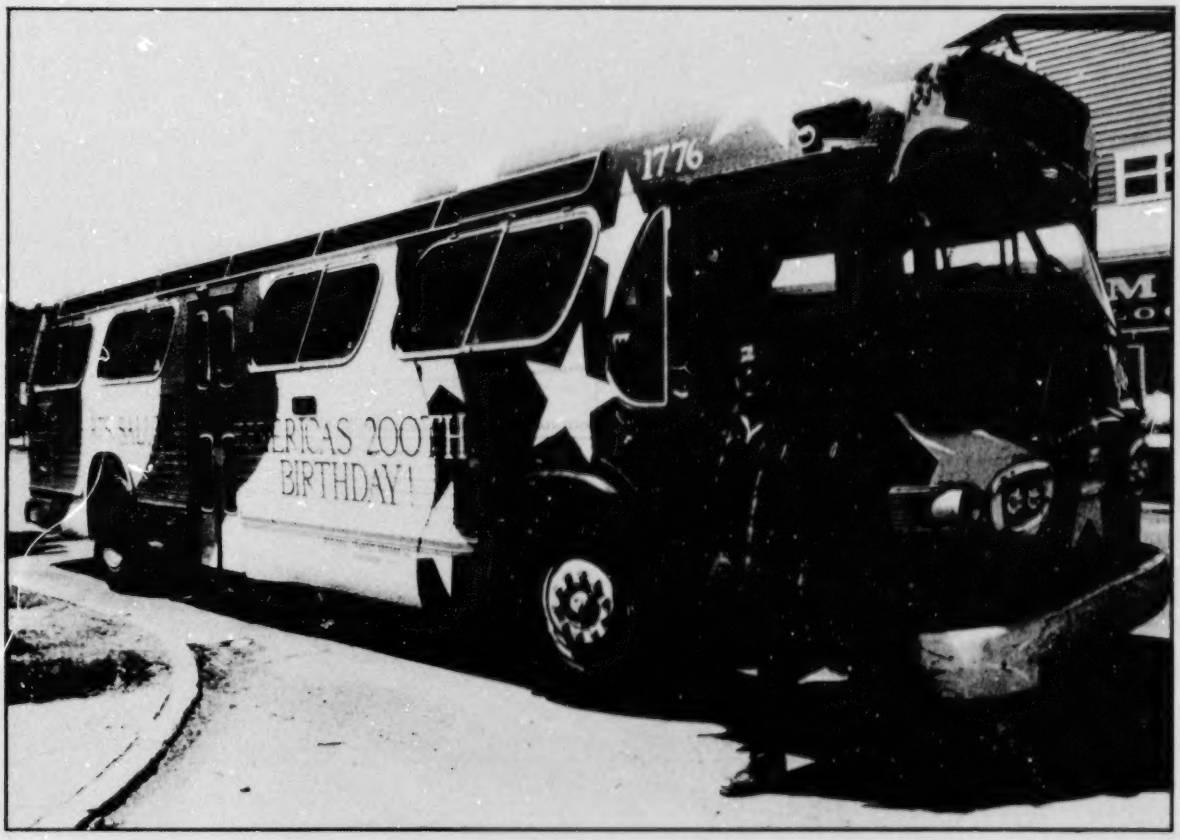
Ed's personal goals are to do his very best in his job, to learn how to use more equipment, and to teach this skill to others. According to Ed, there is plenty of room for men in his line of work. He feels that if more men were willing to try out for jobs such as his, there would be greater acceptance of men in the field.

Margaret Hall

Bus Driver

Margaret Hall, a bus driver with the Regional Transit Company, is a feminist with strong ideas about the society we live in.

Marg didn't plan to be a bus driver, and really doesn't plan to make it



a lifetime career. It is a job that she enjoys and finds financially satisfying.

There is no big secret to handling a large bus, according to Marg. Special bus driving skills can be learned with training, she notes, and these skills are important; they do not require physical strength. Because other women drivers broke the barrier of sex discrimination in her field, Marg has not experienced discrimination in her job. However, she notes that most drivers, all mechanics, and all bosses where she works are male.

Before working for Regional Transit Company, Marg had driven a school bus and been employed as a teacher. She had also been very active in the anti-war movement. Her present goals for herself include leaving the city to become a farmer, because she enjoys working the earth, being outdoors, and being independent of the city economy.

Marg feels good that there is now a lot of energy coming from women to change situations that are oppressive to them. She enjoys being active in the women's movement. Marriage and family are not part of her plans for the future. For Marg, fulfillment and commitment come from following her own desires and talents, and from working for a better society.

Gale Patterson
Lawyer

"It never occurred to me not to learn some kind of skill or trade, or not to be able to get a job." Outside of the members of her immediate family who have always been involved in small businesses, Gale Patterson comes from a family of teachers, principals, and other working people. She doesn't know of one woman in her family who doesn't work. As a Black woman, she feels that the luxury of staying at home every day was never there.

In college Gale majored in political science. She went on to become a computer consultant for five years. She was very successful working with computers and feels it is an excellent field for women. According to Gale, because computer science is a relatively new field, the discrimination that women have found in other industries doesn't exist in the computer field.

Although Gale liked computers very much, through her work experiences she realized that she was not basically interested in a technical career. Law school seemed like a good alternative. Even though Gale was well established in what she was doing, she decided she would rather go to law school and learn a new profession. Since her computer job was still interesting to her, she chose to keep it and to attend law school in the evenings, rather than throw her whole life into turmoil and attend law school during the day.

For Gale, working full-time during the day and attending law school at night was difficult but not impossible. She found other students doing the same thing and managed to make the necessary sacrifices to get everything accomplished.

Before accepting her full-time position with a Rochester law firm, King and McDowell, Gale worked in a neighborhood law center in Texas and was an associate editor at Lawyers Co-op.

Gale enjoys working for her present employer, a minority-dominated law firm that is community oriented. She has developed a special interest in labor law and gets to do a great deal of labor work for local unions.

Is there sexism in the legal profession? According to Gale, one rarely finds a situation in which a female attorney is out-and-out discriminated against or treated with less respect than any other attorney in the profession. Gale feels that there are sometimes subtle put-downs in the courtroom, but rarely does she waste her time or emotions on them. Gale thinks that it is the women who began practicing law 20 or 25 years ago who have the stories to tell; being a woman and a lawyer in the 1980s is not all that unusual.

Margaret Pfuntner

Police Detective

Margaret Pfuntner is a detective in the Rochester Police Department and is currently assigned to the Internal Investigative Unit. Margaret has been in police work for more than 17 years and was promoted to her rank of detective nine years ago.

Today, women police officers must meet the same requirements as men. All police officers must have a high school diploma and pass the police test. When Margaret first joined the force, things were very different. There was a separate women's division, and a woman had to have two years of college, usually in social

work or nursing, to qualify for a position. This was not required of men.

Margaret originally grew interested in being a police officer when she met a woman officer who was enthusiastic about her work. According to Margaret, in police work you get used to everything--and sometimes you need to have a strong stomach. To Margaret, her work is always interesting and the days fly by. She feels that she is making the world a better place.

Margaret is married and has one child. Her husband is a police captain in charge of the vice squad. Margaret says that her daughter, having two parents who are police officers, "has to be good, or else!" As a career woman, Margaret feels she has torn loyalties: she must give to her job and give to her family. She is also involved in running the two farms the family owns.

Margaret recommends to young women that they look at all fields of employment before they choose one. She says, "We never thought of options before; we just assumed some things were for boys and some for girls." Her advice to young women continues: "If you want to go into a field that we call a man's field, you must go in and do it properly. There's no reason you can't. Never say, 'Doors are closed to me.' You don't belong in the kitchen. If your husband doesn't like dust around the furniture, hand him the duster. Tell him to dust it himself."

Beatrice Paul
School Board President

Nationwide, the average percentage of school board members who are female is about 10 percent. However, in Rochester, the majority of school board members is female. Beatrice Paul and Brenda Fraser, the two school board members profiled on the following pages, have each served as president of the Rochester City School Board.

Beatrice Paul, president of the Rochester City School Board, was born in Portsmouth, Virginia, and came to Rochester when she was five. To Bea, being Black and Jewish sometimes gave her a lot to contend with. Her parents always encouraged her to pursue her education. Her mother never graduated from high school, which Bea considered a shame, because her mother was a very intelligent person. Bea's father, who was raised in an orphanage, teaches auto mechanics at Brockport University.

Bea did not enter college immediately after high school, by her own choice, but was married at the age of 19 and started a family. Although she herself married at a young age, Bea does not recommend that others do so, but believes that young people should wait until at least age 30 before marrying.

Soon after her marriage, Bea started working with mentally disturbed children at the state hospital--a job she held for six or seven years. During this time, she attended Monroe Community College in the day while continuing to work at the state hospital in the evening. Since Bea's husband worked during the day, there was always one parent at home with the children.

Following the birth of her third child, Bea decided to stay home full-time to care for her young children. After 18 months, though, she wanted to do more, so she opened a nursery school in her basement and operated it for six months. She also became active in a parents' group at School #19. Bea feels that this volunteer experience benefited her greatly. She became involved in the School Parent Advisors to the Neighborhood (SPAN) program, as well as the Day Care Training and Assistance Program, from 1970 to 1975.

Someone suggested to Bea that she reenroll in college so that she might obtain the degree that was to prove important to her. She enrolled in Empire State College and earned her bachelor's degree.

Bea then worked on the Model Cities-funded Pre-School Demonstration Program, working with nine centers in the Model City area, and received recognition from all over the state. She left after she felt that she had accomplished all she had set out to do.

Next Bea ran for the Rochester City School Board. Her primary reason for running for the position was that she felt her training and experience in dealing with so many childhood development programs qualified her to help the schools. She had also traveled a lot and had been able to look at a great many preschool programs. She felt that people wanted the system improved and reorganized. Bea was elected to the school board in November 1975 and took office in January 1976. Rochester City School District was indeed her new opportunity.

"If you give the kids reasons for the things to be done," said Bea, "then they learn from that. . . . They can learn to be independent if someone helps them by giving them an explanation. It may not always be the easiest thing to do, but it will help them become better adults."

Bea's family is very supportive of her efforts. She feels that her busy schedule does not have an adverse effect on the relationship she has with her children. For Bea, it is not the amount of time one spends with one's children, but the quality of the time spent, that matters. So Bea plans to continue doing her job on the Rochester City School Board. She has not experienced any major problems, and she has not come up against any difficulties just because she is a woman.

The advice Bea has for young women and men comes from a saying of her grandmother: "If you stand for nothing, you'll fall for anything. If you're willing to stand up for what you believe in, then you'll be somebody. And you have to believe in yourself."

Brenda Fraser
School Board Member

Brenda Fraser is a member of the Rochester City School Board. Her job is to make policy for the Rochester City School District. Brenda is a former teacher whose family has always been involved in education. She has participated in community activities and is an active member of the Democratic party.

Brenda says that women were serving on school boards before they got the vote, and that the school board has been the most traditional political spot for women. On a national level, the percentage of women involved in politics has been small. According to Brenda, both women and men contribute to helping the school board work effectively. "There is a basic respect for each person who comes with facts and is prepared," she says.

In Brenda's family, every member was expected to achieve, and each received encouragement from parents and grandparents. For a long time, Brenda couldn't identify with the women's movement. She had always expected to achieve her goals and had never felt limited by society.

Brenda is married and has three children. Her husband is supportive of her community involvement. She feels she has had the freedom to work part-time and to run for office because her husband is the family's main wage earner. She thinks that in a family with children, there must be a flexible time schedule for at least one parent.

Brenda enjoys playing on a women's hockey team in the fall and likes outdoor activities such as swimming, canoeing, and backpacking.

Brenda thrives on political life, loves teaching, and is very interested in the theatre. She has done work in historical costume making. In the future, it is possible that Brenda's professional career will move into any of these areas.

Martha Fahrer

Director,
Native American
Cultural Center

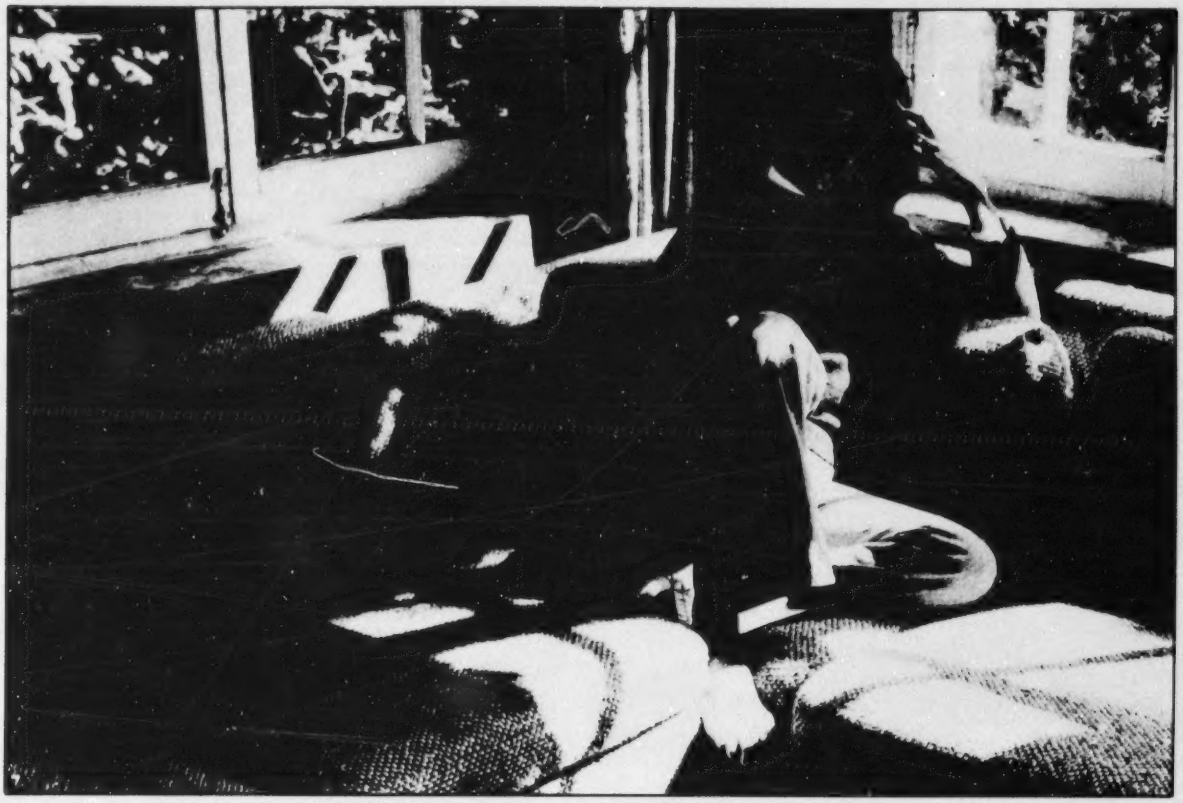
Martha Fahrer is the director of the Native American Cultural Center, a Federally funded community service agency for the urban Native American population. The goal of the Center is to provide resources for the members of the Native American community and to emphasize Native American culture and heritage.

Martha is also an artist. Before accepting her current position, she was employed as a commercial artist, doing design work for many companies in Rochester. She also found time to undertake graduate work in Native American studies.

Martha knows that some men are not used to working with women in administrative positions and must learn to accept the fact that a woman can have the same professional expertise and understanding as a man. Martha feels that this is not a major problem in her current position. She finds that people in Rochester's social service agencies are accustomed to dealing with women at administrative levels.

Martha feels that there is discrimination against women in the field of art, however. In the art world, men have many more gallery shows than women, according to Martha. She also points out that it is hard to find large numbers of minority women who have the time and financial resources to make a living at art. She says that Native American women and women from other minority groups are busy raising children or working at a steady, paid job, and the time needed to explore their creative talents is often nonexistent.

Martha feels that women should have the opportunities and choices to enjoy a full and rewarding life. She is grateful to her parents, who encouraged all their children to have the freedom and opportunities to pursue their interests.



Judy Kaltenbach

Homemaker/
Part-time Model

"If there is any liberation anywhere, everybody has to be free to do what they want to do, without being looked down on. So I feel free to stay home and be a homemaker and a mother." These words come from Judy Kaltenbach, a wife and the mother of thirteen children, eleven of whom currently live at home.

Judy spends most of her time at home and also does some free-lance fashion modeling and television commercials. A part-time modeling career fits easily into her life. She is paid very well for a few hours' worth of work.

Her top priority is her home; her modeling career is second. "I try to treat motherhood as a career," Judy explains. Her children are each interesting individuals, and Judy finds that it is a full-time job just to keep up with them.

There was a time when Judy worked full-time outside her home, and she found she had problems getting organized. She feels that it is possible for any woman to combine a family and career successfully. In her own situation, she decided that she wanted to play a more active part in her children's lives.

Judy is pleased that women are now receiving the recognition they have so long deserved. She is delighted to see her own daughters winning recognition in sports and other areas. As the oldest of eight children, Judy found that the money set aside for her own education had been limited because of her sex. She therefore wants all of her children, boys and girls, to have equal educational opportunities.

Judy sees that there will be changes ahead for her as her children grow up. She feels that she will still be young enough to start something new and entirely different. A career in nursing is one option she may explore.

Judy believes that each woman must do what works for her. Her own life is important and fulfilling, and to her, that's what counts.

Carolyn Wiggins

Divinity Student

"If we're all called by God to serve people, then how can they say that my call is invalid just because I'm a woman?" Carolyn Wiggins is a student at Colgate Rochester Divinity School. She has completed a student placement at Mt. Olivet Baptist Church and became the Assistant Chaplain at the University of Rochester for the fall of 1978. She is also considering becoming a chaplain in the U.S. Navy one day.

A well-rounded student, Carolyn was a psychology major in college and also studied philosophy and music. She participated in varsity sports such as

volleyball and basketball, and she played the French horn, trumpet, and viola. During college, she was very interested in meditation and Eastern religions. On the advice of a woman role model, who was the vice-president of her college, Carolyn applied to divinity school.

That role model was a very important influence for Carolyn. As she puts it, "Before her, I didn't know any professional women. The most professional woman I knew was probably one nurse or a hairdresser. I never knew a female doctor, dentist, member of the clergy, optometrist, or vice-president of a school."

Carolyn admits that men and women, Blacks and Whites, find it unusual that she is a minister. Her family is amazed by her decision. She feels she doesn't have to make excuses for choosing the particular profession she has selected. She keeps in mind the fact that she can now serve as a role model for today's young women. According to Carolyn, she experiences a certain independence in not having to follow in others' footsteps.

Carolyn says, "You never know if you can be successful unless you try. Most women are strong by the mere fact that they can survive dealing with men." It is clear that Carolyn sees herself as a strong, successful survivor.

Edward Charbonneau

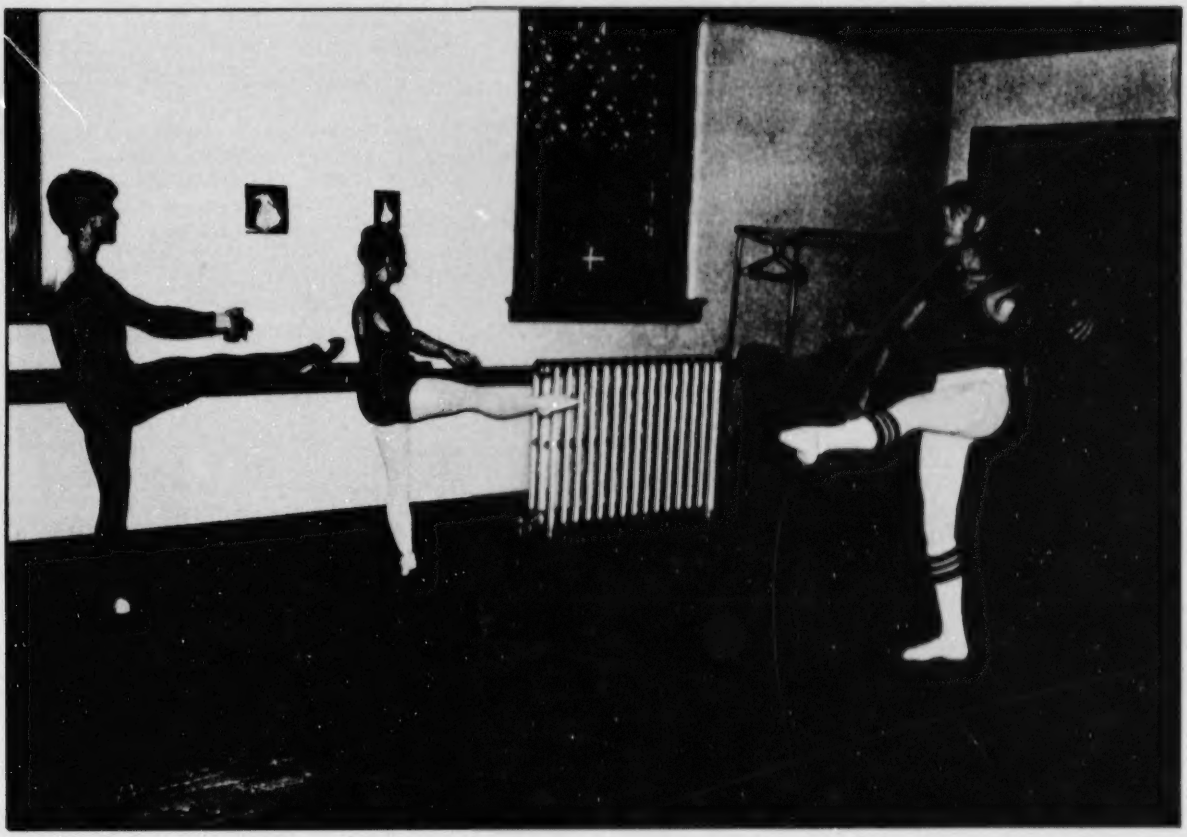
Ballet Master

Edward Charbonneau is Ballet Master of the Community Ballet Centre. A longtime principal soloist with the Mercury Ballet Company, he has also performed with Opera under the Stars and appeared with the Royal Danish Ballet and the American Ballet Theater. For nine years he headed the Dance Department of the Hochstein School of Music, and has taught as either regular or guest faculty at many of the Rochester area schools.

Edward has always liked to dance. Although his parents didn't really approve, he started working at age twelve in order to pay for dance lessons. It wasn't until his late teens that he took up ballet, at the suggestion of his girl friend.

According to Edward, traditional ballet is very sexist. He says that the male dancer is traditionally the eternal prince, possessing immense strength, and the female dancer is ultrasoft and feminine. In today's world, Edward feels, we can't afford to have the same artificial portrayal of the sexes as is presented on stage. He notes that it is especially interesting that all the young women and men in his dance classes are equally interested in sports, and that most are involved in other forms of athletics, in addition to dance.

Edward is married and has six children. He refers to his wife as "multitalented--the original liberated woman." His wife, who is a dancer as well, has pursued careers as a fine artist, a commercial artist, and a nurse. Edward has always been involved in his children's care. Cooking and other household tasks are shared as well in the Charbonneau home.



Although he has held other jobs to help earn money, and at one time considered pursuing a medical career, dancing is obviously "where it's at" for Edward. His school is successful--and it has the largest group of male dancers in the area.

Jane Erwin
Letter Carrier

Times are changing. It's not that unusual for today's "mailman" to be a woman. Yet many people still feel that the job of letter carrier is a nontraditional occupation for women.

College teaching was Jane Erwin's goal until she realized that she didn't want the graduate degree in English she'd been pursuing. She has no regrets about her current job as letter carrier. Although Jane originally took the job for financial reasons, she finds that she enjoys being outdoors, meeting people, and having time to think while performing her work. According to Jane, because her work is traditionally considered a "man's job," the financial rewards are excellent.

Before becoming a letter carrier, Jane held another job considered nontraditional for women, that of water meter reader. In fact, she was the first woman to hold that job in the city of Rochester.

Jane feels strongly that people should have as many options as possible open to them. She believes that stereotyping has limited the choices open to women. She refuses to believe that women, who make up more than 50 percent of the nation's population, must have limited occupations because of sex-role stereotyping.

Jane is a feminist who believes that it is important for women to hold nontraditional jobs. In addition, she thinks that the jobs women traditionally hold should be upgraded in terms of status and pay. When Jane worked as a home health-care aide, she did a lot of hard work but was not paid well because her work was considered a "woman's job."

Jane felt that her choices were limited in terms of job training when she was growing up. She was told that women could have certain jobs, but not others. She would like the young women and men of today to feel that all career opportunities are open to them.

Deborah Wafer
Physician

Deborah Wafer always had high expectations for herself, and they got higher and higher as she went along. Deborah is now a family medicine physician in the Family Medicine Clinic at Highland Hospital.

As a high school student, Deborah felt that her parents expected her to get good grades and to go on to college. She says she was well motivated and also competitive.

Deborah did not decide overnight to become a physician. She got her undergraduate degree in nutrition, and later her master's degree in nutrition, also. She was employed as a nutritionist for the health department in both Detroit and Cleveland.

Little by little, Deborah began to lose interest in her career as a nutritionist. As a Black female, she felt she had to have excellent degrees and

work experience to compete in the job market. As time went on, she realized that she had become overqualified for what she was doing and needed a new challenge. It was at this time that she decided to apply to medical school.

Deborah feels that there is a lot of pressure on a student in medical school. In addition to the strenuous studying required of a student in medical school, she feels that practical life experience is also essential for becoming a good doctor. Deborah thinks that her experience in the working world before she entered medical school had a positive influence on her; she feels she developed the discipline required of a medical school student through her earlier job experiences.

As a resident physician, Deborah works an average of 115 hours per week. When she does have free time, she is usually too tired to engage in her hobbies--bicycling and swimming--so she uses the time to sleep, read, hunt for antique furniture, or chat with friends.

Being a doctor is a demanding career. Deborah is challenged by the demands of her profession and continues to set high expectations for herself.

Patricia Adduci

City Clerk

Patricia Adduci is City Clerk for the city of Rochester. She is the first woman to hold the office in Rochester and was appointed to the administrative position by the City Council.

The Office of the City Clerk sells licenses, is responsible for maintaining the city's code and charter, and publishes the City Council proceedings. The Office of the City Clerk also administers the city's records management program.

Before her appointment as City Clerk, Pat held various part-time positions and did a lot of volunteer work. She once ran for election to the county legislature but lost by three votes. Much of her knowledge about government came from reporting for the newspaper City East.

Pat feels she is constantly gaining on-the-job skills in management. Had she anticipated being in government, she says, she would have gone to business school or obtained a degree in public policy or urban affairs. Although her college major was English, she never prepared for a specific career. Her goals at the time were marriage and a family. She admits that she never asked herself the question "What am I going to do with my whole life?" On the other hand, she says that no one encouraged her to explore career choices, especially in government.

Pat feels that her job is good for her marriage and family life. She says that through the years, she has developed more of an interest in herself as a person apart from her role and responsibilities to her husband and children. She feels happy and productive in her present job, and this means that the quality of her life at home is better. All home responsibilities are shared between her husband and herself.

Pat finds it exciting to be at the center of city government. Although her job is a high-pressured one, she is delighted to be "where the action is" and would like to stay in government, at one level or another, in the future.

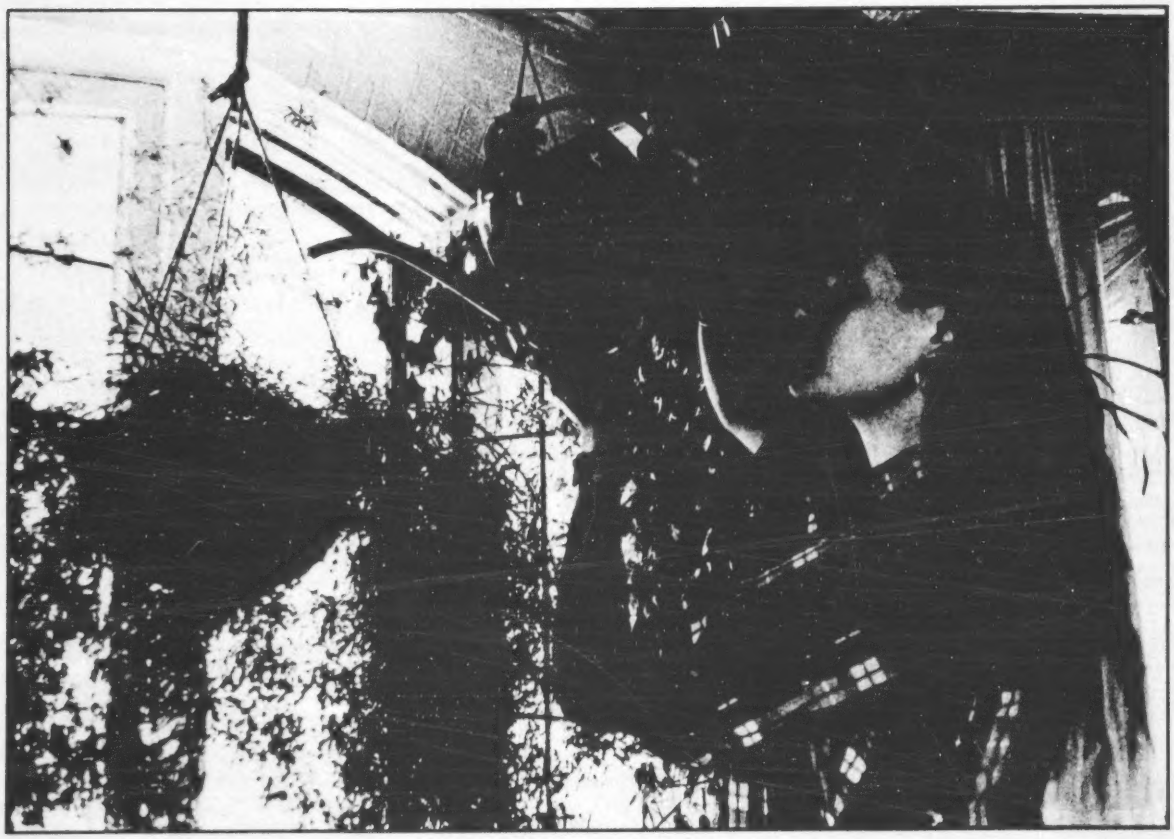
Pat believes in human liberation. She says, "Each person must develop himself or herself apart from other things he or she is involved in." Pat feels there should be more women in government at the managerial and administrative levels. She feels that she has not experienced any sex-role-related difficulties on her job. She says, "If you believe in yourself and expect people to believe in you as a professional sort of person, there is no problem being accepted."

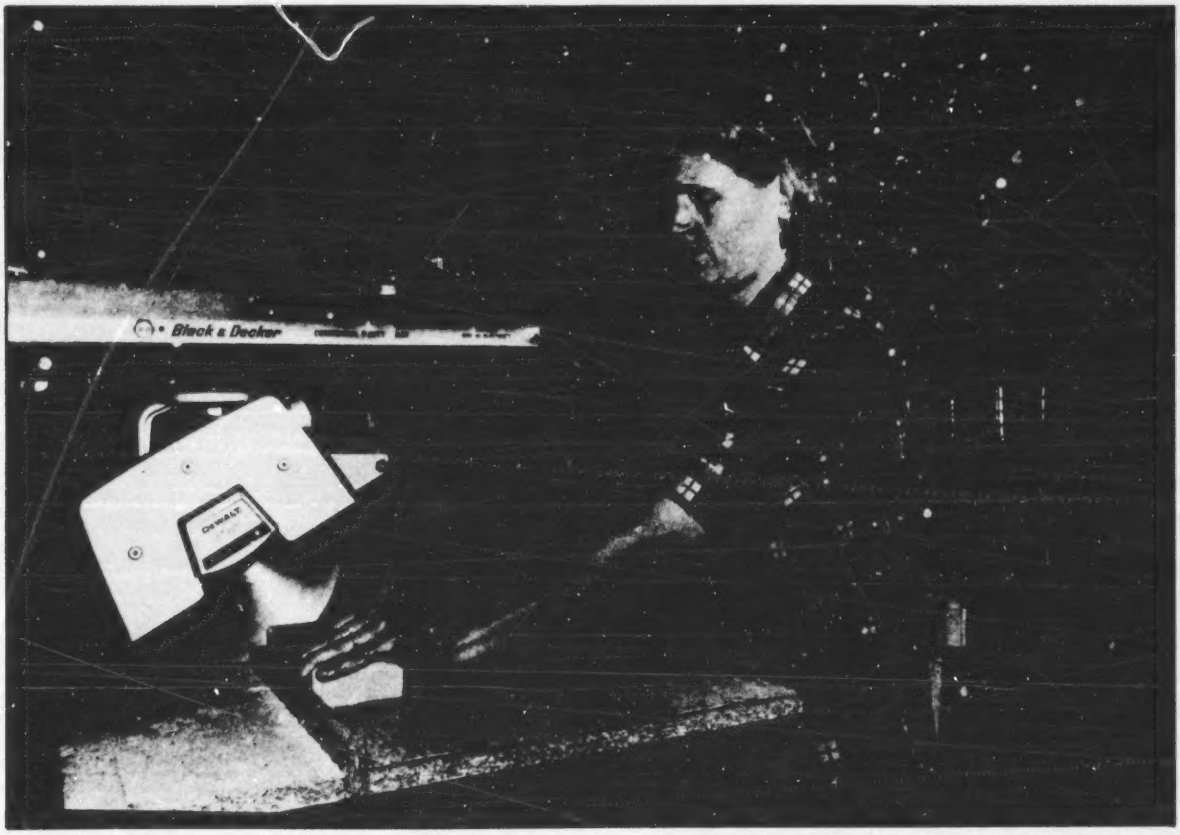
Barbara McConnell

General Contractor

Barbara McConnell is a forthright and open person who speaks easily about her job, her life, and her plans for the future. To Barb, general contracting is a challenging job that calls on many different talents. She is involved with plumbing, electrical work, and carpentry.

Barb has had no formal schooling in remodeling. Before becoming a general contractor in 1974, she had a background in art and work experience in commercial art, crafts, and youth work.





According to Barb, people are often surprised at her occupation, and reactions range from amusement to curiosity and delight. She says that because she is a woman in partnership with a man, people often assume that she handles only the decorating end of the job. This is not the case, and people are surprised when they find out that she does the same work as her partner.

Barb's plans for the future include continuing her education to pursue a career in counseling. In one sense, she knows she will be disappointed at leaving a nontraditional job. She enjoys her work and has learned a lot about herself doing it, yet she knows that working with people and being exposed to their feelings will give her "the most important kind of strokes" for her personality. This is why she plans to move into a more people-oriented career.

Barb feels that there is a lot of room for women in the contracting field. She says that women can apprentice themselves to other contractors to learn the tricks of the trade, and she knows that courses are available to learn the skills needed to be a general contractor. Barb feels that women should exert pressure for the right to take these courses.

Barb is an active member of the Genesee Valley chapter of NOW and considers herself a feminist. Her other interests are growing plants, cooking, playing the drums, and participating in the 19th Ward Community Association.

Ursula Piñero

School Principal

Ursula Piñero is the principal of Henry Lomb School #20. In the 1976-77 school year, she was one of a small number of women principals in the school district. She is also active in community affairs, which include the Ibero-American Action League, the Youth Board, and the Principals' Council, and she is active in her role as a parent.

Ursula feels that her job as principal is important. She says, "When you feel what you are doing is important, you feel good about it." She believes that the early school experiences students have may decide whether they make it to graduation or become drop-outs. Her job as principal allows her to be very involved with young students, which is a different experience from mothering. Ursula says that when she is acting in the capacity of a professional, it is easier to be patient and accepting of the students

than it would be if they were her own children.

The Puerto Rican community is very accepting of Ursula's role as principal. She explains that in Puerto Rico, the community is used to having women elementary school principals, more so than in Rochester. Although some people are surprised that she is a woman school administrator, she feels her job is not that unusual.

Ursula has been able successfully to combine being a mother and having a career. Her involvements in her job and in the community have encouraged her own children to be very independent. Her own teenagers are "well trained," she says, and can take care of themselves and the home. She feels that her children are proud of her accomplishments, but miss her at times when she is busy with her job and activities.

Ursula has goals for herself as a professional educator and as a mother. Her professional goals involve continuing to improve Henry Lomb School. Her goals as a parent are for her children to become successful adults who realize their full potential.

In addition to her involvement with her career, the community, and her family, Ursula enjoys reading and likes to cook special meals.

Sally Knorr
Community Organizer

Sally Knorr, a community organizer, is presently Coordinator of Community Development at Action for a Better Community Center #2. Her job is to teach people how to solve neighborhood problems by working together to get their needs taken care of. According to Sally, a community organizer must be very familiar with the neighborhood--its government, its schools, the services available, and all the decision-making people.

Sally learned her work by doing it. Since her junior year in high school, she has been involved in volunteer activities with youth and neighborhood groups. In a sense, this volunteer work was the free education she received in exchange for her free time; formal courses of study in community organizing started only a couple of years ago locally.

Community work is hard and challenging, Sally says, because there is always a lot to be done. Her work demands much time, and often she must attend meetings in the evening. Sally feels she is doing the most she can possibly do. Because she grew up in the neighborhood where she works, she feels especially good that she is successful for her own sense of pride and because she can help people in her own community.

Sally feels that her involvement in her work helps her three children understand the community in which they live. Most of the time away from her job she spends taking care of her family. She wishes she had more time for her special interests, though, which are photography, reading, gardening, and baseball.

Sally loves her job so much that she says it's hard to imagine doing anything else. She sees progress being made, and that's what's important to her.

Nancy Dupree

Poet/Actress

"Obstacles are like lemons. Someone hands you a lemon, and either you can suck it and get lockjaw or you can make some lemonade. I am a lemonade maker." Nancy Dupree is a poet and an actress. She believes that if you are Black and a woman, certain things are closed to you. She chooses to delight in being a Black woman. She enjoys a sense of accomplishment in her very survival.

Nancy works in the circulation department of About . . . Time magazine, yet her heart and soul belong to putting life into words. She loves poetry and feels her ability to write is a gift from God. Words are her strength, she says.

Sweet Thunder, an album of Nancy's poetry, has been produced. She also gives poetry readings in performances at local colleges and is an actress with local theatrical productions as well.

Nancy performs for pleasure and also for money. She explains that what she has to offer is as valuable as a concert at the War Memorial. "It takes money to pay the rent and buy groceries," she says.

As a child, Nancy was shown role models. The people in her community also encouraged her to "become something magnificent." As she puts it, "When people believe in you, you believe in yourself. It puts steel in your spine and sharpness in your mind." All of these experiences helped her in her studies in college and graduate school.

According to Nancy, the best preparation for writing is reading. She advises young would-be poets to "become intimate with the English language." She encourages young people to read, learn grammar, deal with people, listen, and observe. "Go to school, get that exposure," she says. "However, life experiences are educational. They are just as important as schooling is."

Nancy says, "I'm a woman and I'm Black, and I like being both. I intend to be as fine a Black woman as I possibly can."

Olga Sardá
Déntist

Olga Sardá is a dentist who is on the staff of the Anthony Jordan Health Center. In addition, she does dental research at the University of Rochester.

Olga was born in Cuba and has lived in the United States since 1958. She received her college education and basic dental training in Cuba. She completed her internship at the Eastman Dental Center and earned a postgraduate degree in dental research from the University of Rochester.

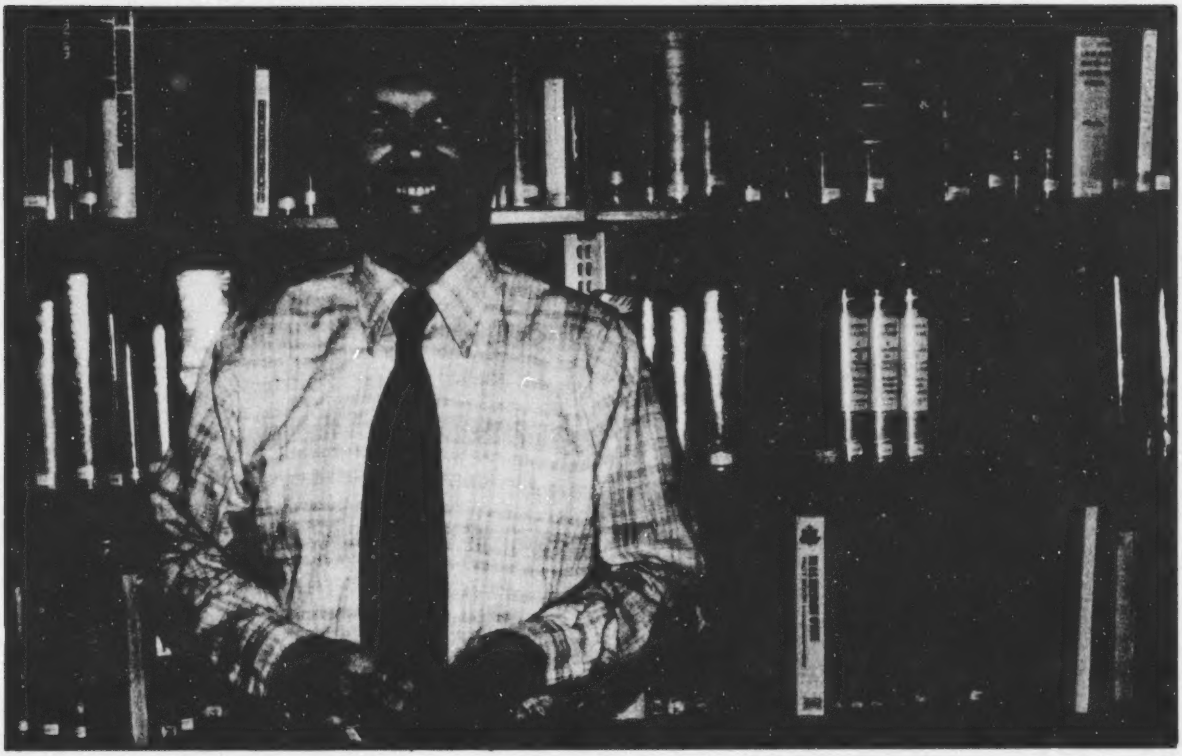
Olga's mother is a dentist, as were several other members of her family. In Cuba, Olga explains, it is fairly common for women to be dentists. Almost half of her classmates at dental school were women. She estimates that before 1958, 20 to 25 percent of the practicing dentists in Cuba were women.

According to Olga, in Cuba and many other small countries, women often hold professional degrees. In such countries, she says, women are not discouraged from entering the medical field in any capacity. Discrimination because of rigid sex roles does occur, however, in jobs requiring heavy physical labor, she states.

When Olga first came to the United States, she was surprised that so few women were dentists. She quickly realized how different things were in this country by the way patients reacted when they first met her. Apparently, says Olga, they were not used to having a woman for a dentist--but after their initial surprise, sex was no longer an issue.

Although Olga has some leisure time, she notes that in any health-related field, a person must always be a student, and the continual studying can be time-consuming. But since Olga enjoys her career, she doesn't mind the studying, and she makes time for her other interests--playing tennis, going out, and especially traveling.

Olga thinks that more American women should choose dentistry as a profession. Although she is single, she believes that a woman with a family can easily combine a dental career with family responsibilities. After all, she says, her own mother is an example of that.



Steve Lesnak
Librarian

Steve Lesnak, head librarian at the Winton Road Branch Library, is a specialist in adult services. He enjoys his work and speaks of his career with enthusiasm and energy.

Steve sees the library as the "people's university." He believes that people come to a library in order to learn because they want to learn. The most exciting part of his job, he says, is "playing detective." This means that Steve must discover what people really like to read and then match the right people with the right books.

Steve was one of five men in a library school class composed of 50 or 60 women. It took him some time before he realized it was unusual for a man to be a librarian; until the early 1920s, says Steve, all professional librarians were men. It has never really bothered him to be in a field dominated by women because he enjoys his profession. Although there are two male librarians at his branch,

Steve notes that the public usually asks the women who are clerks or pages for assistance. Apparently the public automatically assumes librarians are women.

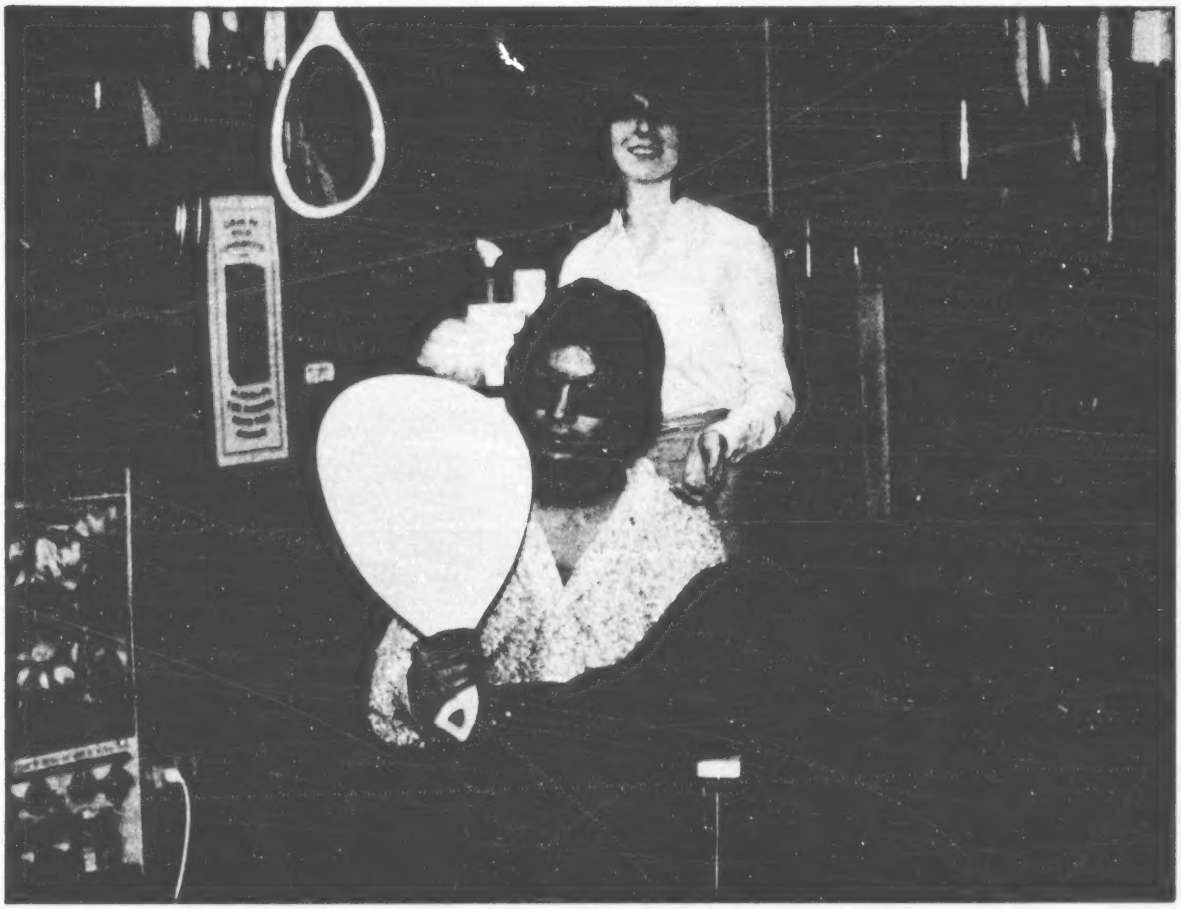
Steve is aware that his early upbringing influenced many of his attitudes toward the roles of men and women. He credits his mother with freeing him to be himself. His mother and father together ran a service station. Steve feels that his mother was a liberated woman 40 years ago. He grew up expecting that women would work. As he explains, "My mother raised me, she also pumped gas; my mother raised me, she also greased cars; my mother raised me, she also swept the driveway."

What he learned at school was contrary to Steve's way of thinking, however, as he learned about the stereotypes of what men and women "should" do. But since the things Steve learned at school didn't match the reality of his upbringing, it was easy for him to reject the stereotypes.

Steve feels that he has grown in his own liberation by being very involved in his child's upbringing. Although his own father spent most of his time working, Steve's mother worked and raised him as well. Steve feels that he is "doing work and doing my son, too."

Steve and his wife, a teacher, are expecting a second child soon. Steve hopes to arrange for paternity leave from the library so that his wife can continue teaching after their baby is born. He would like to experience taking care of an infant this time around.

Steve is a dynamic and personable individual. He finds enjoyment in being a librarian and in being a parent.



Bonnie Schubmehl

Barber

Bonnie Schubmehl, owner of Bonnie's Hair Palace, is a barber and a businessperson. According to Bonnie, many people assume that "barber" means man and "hair stylist" means woman. This is not true, she says: barber is an asexual title, meaning a person who is a technician in haircutting.

In high school, Bonnie used to cut her fellow students' hair. One day she approached her counselor about becoming a barber. That very day, there was a person visiting her school to talk about careers in barbering, and after attending the lecture, Bonnie knew she had found the career for her.

Immediately after graduating from high school, Bonnie went to barber school. Then she fulfilled the 18-month apprenticeship, passed the state exam, and received her license. At age 19, she opened her own barber shop.

About 85 percent of Bonnie's customers are men. When she first opened her shop, she says, some men had difficulty regarding her as a professional barber--some even felt it was just "a good business gimmick for a woman." Bonnie says that the longer she has been in the business, though, the more her professional reputation has grown, and, because of this, she finds that customers relate to her with more dignity and respect.

Bonnie has many strong opinions about life and enjoys expressing them. "At Bonnie's Hair Palace," she says, "there is always some interchange of thinking going on." She remarks that political, religious, and moral debates are the order of the day, creating a lively exchange of opinions in her shop.

Bonnie would like to see schools encourage young people to get loans and start businesses. She enjoys being her own boss as much as she enjoys being skilled in the art of barbering.

Mary Jane Walker

Editor/Reporter/ Producer

Mary Jane Walker is editor in chief of Communicade, Rochester's first Black newspaper, and is also a reporter and producer for Channel 21.

As a young girl, Mary Jane thought that she'd like to become an executive secretary. She completed an associate's degree program in secretarial science and for a time worked as a legal secretary. She eventually returned to college to get another degree.

Mary Jane's interest in sociology led to an interest in the news, she says; both fields concern people and what they are doing. After a friend saw some articles Mary Jane had written, the friend asked her to work on Communicade. As editor in chief of Communicade, Mary Jane determines what is printed in the paper and does everything else that needs to be done, including typesetting and fund raising.

Because of Mary Jane's work with Communicade, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting recruited her as a minority trainee for Channel 21. In this position, she researches news items, writes scripts, produces and edits videotapes, and does live broadcasting.

Having been in the world of the media for several years now, Mary Jane feels she has proved herself. She says, "Sometimes when a person is trying to climb the ladder, it causes problems." Now that she knows she has proved herself in the media, she feels better able to concentrate on her family. She doesn't want to get totally wrapped up in her work world, she says.

Mary Jane feels that there are a lot of problems for women trying to pursue a career in a "man's world." Women must be strong to overcome discrimination from men, she thinks. She believes that her biggest problem with men in the work world is their "being into jive, when I'm into business." She feels that it is important to "let people know you expect to be treated in a businesslike way." Sometimes this means you have to insult a few men, she adds, noting that she tries to do this nicely, yet assertively.

Since her teenage years, Mary Jane has had a strong belief in herself. She says she started feeling she could do anything she set her mind to. Her boyfriend, who is now her husband, encouraged her by being intelligent and competent himself, she remarks, and several girls in school who were serious about studying and competitive about their achievements also influenced her.

Whatever the source, Mary Jane has the ingredients for success--as an editor, a broadcaster, and a family person.

Linda Marsh

Technical Representative

Several years ago, Linda Marsh was a secretary for the Xerox Corporation. Today she is a technical representative who repairs machines for Xerox customers.

Tests at Xerox indicated that Linda had an aptitude for the job of technical representative, and she took courses within the company to increase her electrical and mechanical background. Linda was the first woman in her branch of the company to become a "tech rep." Now, she says, there are several other women who work with her in this capacity at Xerox.

Linda has always been interested in machinery. She grew up on a farm and became familiar with the farm's mechanical equipment, as she and her brother shared many of the farm chores. She eventually learned to do the repairs on her own motorcycle as well.

According to Linda, being a "tech rep" can be physically tiring (she carries around a 40-pound toolcase), and a person certainly gets dirty on the job. To Linda, these are ordinary working conditions. She feels a sense of accomplishment when she can repair a broken machine.

Linda loves being on her own and not being confined to an office. She enjoys talking with customers as well. Do customers react strangely to having a woman fix their machines? Linda feels that when she goes in with a self-assured attitude and is enthusiastic and capable, she encounters no problems with customers' reactions.

Although Linda's family had assumed she would be a teacher or a secretary, they are, she says, very proud of her in her present job. Linda feels that she is in an excellent field for women. In the beginning, she says, it is hard to keep up with men, as men usually have a better mechanical background and more experience in fixing things than women do. Yet if a woman has natural ability, a decent training in mechanics, likes meeting people, and most of all has a good head on her shoulders, says Linda, she certainly can be a success as a technical representative.

David Bunting
Telephone Operator

David Bunting is a former watchmaker who is employed as a long-distance and local telephone operator for Rochester Telephone. He finds it exciting to talk with from 500 to 700 people each day over the telephone.

Male telephone operators are in the minority. David says that originally men did more telephone operating--that it only became a "woman's job" when male workers needed more money to support their families. David says that the pay has increased, and that it is now a job that could be attractive to anyone.

"Study, learn as much as you possibly can, know people well, be able to converse with people, and improve your memory"--these are the pointers David offers for being successful in his line of work. "You are never alone on this job," he says. "You have to make snap decisions that are important."

When he is not working at Rochester Telephone, David pursues many hobbies and interests. He enjoys photography, hi-fi sound equipment, camping, and news reporting. He is also a second lieutenant in the Civil Air Patrol.

The Interviewers

Edna Lois Crittenden

Sandra Dunbar

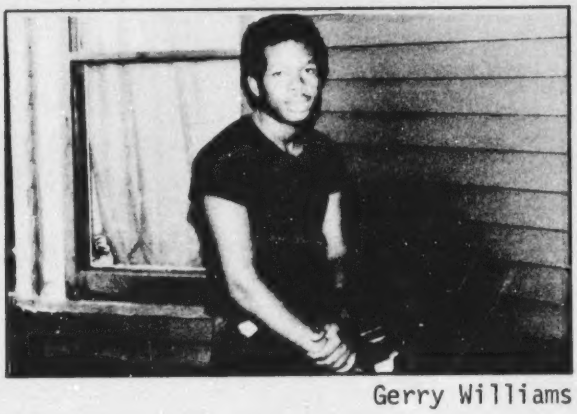
Seth Garlock

Missing: Wayne Gallo

Patricia Glenn

Kenneth Smith

Patrick Kirton



Gerry Williams

Carmen Ortiz